

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in the Office Action dated December 10, 2004. Claims 1-3, 8-13 and 15-17 were rejected. Also, Claims 4-7 and 14 were objected to. Claims 1, 11 and 16 have been amended. Claims 7, 14, and 17 have been cancelled.

Objected To Claims

The present Office Action has objected to Claims 4-7 and 14 as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response to the present Office Action, independent Claim 1 has been amended to include substantially the same subject matter of dependent Claim 7. Also, independent Claims 11 and 16 were amended to include substantially the same subject matter of dependent Claim 14. Therefore, amended independent Claims 1, 11, and 16 are now in condition for allowance. Additionally, Claims 2-6, 8-10, 12, 13, and 15 are now allowable at least for the same reasons as the amended independent claims upon which they depend.

35 USC § 102 Rejections

The Office Action has rejected Claims 1-3, 8-13, and 15-17 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,489,833. The Office Action found that the '833 patent disclosed all of the elements of the rejected claims.

Although applicant respectfully disagrees with the Office Action's rejections for several reasons, these rejections are now moot in view of the amendments to the independent claims as discussed above. Additionally, in view of the above amendments, the Examiner is asked to pass this pending application to allowance at the earliest convenience.

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Respectfully submitted,

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